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A View from Melrose

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Another Linfield 'defining moment'



President Vivian A. Bull, center, speaks with Catherine Dondlinger '05 about the latter's research during the Linfield College Science Symposium held on May 14 in Murdock Hall. More than 20 Linfield students, including David McAdams '04, presented research.

A phone call one rainy November morning in 1996 changed everything.

We were in the planning stages of a capital campaign, and were concerned about a proposed goal of \$28 million. Little did we anticipate the challenge of raising \$65 million, much less the possibility of reaching an extended target of \$70 million. But then came that phone call, telling me that the Hewlett-Packard Company would close its McMinnville plant. As we absorbed the implications of this news, it became clear that Linfield had reached an historic crossroads—a Defining Moment that would shape its next hundred years.

The vision of the campus doubling in size was exciting in 1996. But nothing compares to the sense of wonderment today when standing among the completed Keck Campus buildings for the first time and seeing in them the fulfillment of many dreams.

While the new facilities are beautiful, buildings are not ends in themselves. The real significance of the new library, theatre and fine arts center lies in the improvements they bring to the quality of life and learning for

students and for all of us who work to make their education the best it can be. For example, we expected the new Jereld R. Nicholson Library would be popular with students, and indeed most of the study areas are fully occupied all evening. We did not anticipate that demand would be such that students would petition to have library hours extended. We responded by doing so. I cannot imagine better testimony to the benefits this new facility is bringing to our campus.

I was fortunate enough to be present when the first students came into the new James F Miller Fine Arts Center. You could see the excitement in their faces as they contemplated working in a place that is spacious, well equipped, and flooded with natural light from the floor-to-ceiling north windows. The exceptional work displayed in the spring senior art show must have drawn inspiration from the new surroundings.

I sometimes joked with the theatre faculty and students about losing their creativity once they no longer had to cope with the hardships of Pioneer Hall. Well, just take in a play someday soon, and you'll see that far from dulling creativity, the Marshall Theatre has created new possibilities for some highly talented individuals.

As important as the new land and buildings are, the campaign addressed other priorities as well: growth in the endowment for scholarships, completion of the chaplaincy endowment, enhanced resources for technology, faculty development and collaborative student-faculty research. One can never anticipate exactly how all campaign gifts will be designated. For instance, the goal for scholarships was \$5 million and we received more than \$15 million. That is a real joy!

Every campaign ends with some objective unrealized. For Linfield, our immediate capital priority remains a new facility on the Keck Campus for our outstanding music program.

While there are always tasks for tomorrow, today we celebrate an achievement undreamed of just a few years ago. I want to express my deep appreciation to all who have worked for and contributed to the success of "Linfield—The Defining Moment." The college is stronger because of your support.

—Vivian A. Bull